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ABSTRACT

Coincidental changes in the perceived nature of Australian society and in the linguistic sciences are creating urgent needs for the re-education of Australian language teachers. Recognition of the pluralism of Australian society has highlighted the inappropriateness of the languages, objectives, and methods of traditional language teaching. Similarly, rapid changes in insights into the nature of language and of language learning are leaving the approaches common in the schools outdated and largely ineffectual. A recent study has shown, in fact, that this inefficiency and its concomitant low exit-point proficiency levels are the major cause of the recent decline in student numbers. These factors make the need for the continual re-education of language teachers of increasing urgency in order to provide teachers with facility in more appropriate languages, to enhance teacher proficiency in the existing languages, to update teachers' cultural understanding, and, from a rational understanding of the nature of language and of how it is learned, to increase teachers' methodological effectiveness. (Author)

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THE RE-EDUCATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS FOR THE PLURALIST SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

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Coincidental changes in the perceived nature of Australian society and in the linguistic sciences are creating urgent needs for the re-education of Australian language teachers. Recognition of the pluralism of Australian society has highlighted the inappropriateness of the languages, objectives, and methods of traditional language teaching. Similarly, rapid changes in insights into the nature of language and of language learning are leaving the approaches common in the schools outdated and largely ineffectual. A recent study has shown, in fact, that this inefficiency and its concomitant low exit-point proficiency levels are the major cause of the recent decline in student numbers. These factors make the need for the continual re-education of language teachers of increasing urgency in order to provide teachers with facility in more appropriate languages, to enhance teacher proficiency in the existing languages, to update teachers' cultural understanding, and, from a rational understanding of the nature of language and of how it is learned, to increase teachers' methodological effectiveness.

SUMMARY

THE RE-EDUCATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS FOR THE PLURALIST SOCIETY

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I. INTRODUCTION

It is not surprising that language teachers today should be severely questioning their role and often their very right to exist in the schools. Despondency, self-doubt, and insecurity seem to be widespread. In such circumstances, the problem is not only one for the teachers directly involved but it is also one for teacher educators. If the latter are to accept even partial responsibility for the continuous education of teachers, their primary task must be to offer to teachers the means to better conceptualize and carry out their task and to gain the renewed confidence in their ability and worth that this can bring.

II. THE PRESENT SITUATION

II.1 Student Numbers

When the present state of affairs in the language teaching system in Australia is examined, one finds that the insecurity that teachers feel is fully justified. In particular, FL student numbers have declined dramatically even though total student numbers in secondary and tertiary education have increased. Figures from the Australian Universities Commission show that language enrolments at matriculation declined from 40.3% of candidates in 1967 to 16.3% in 1974 [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1975 : 18]. Since then, with the continuing abolition of university entrance requirements, this decline has undoubtedly continued [Cf. Horwood 1972]. In Queensland, for example, where this factor has only recently started to become important, Grade 12 enrolments have declined

from 33.5% of total enrolments in 1973 to 20.8% in 1976. Still more disturbing is the decline from 47.9% in Grade 9 in 1973 to 31.7% in 1976 with the rate accelerating each year. [Figures supplied by Board of Secondary School Studies, Queensland.] The recent report of the Committee on Foreign Languages of the Australian Academy of the Humanities reveals also an accelerating decline in university enrolments whether measured in absolute or percentage terms. Thus language enrolments in 1965 were 9.5% of the total university population, in 1970, 8.5% and in 1973, 7% [Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign Languages 1975 : 48]. These figures clearly indicate that current language courses are both failing to attract students and, having attracted them, are failing to convince them that they provide worthwhile and relevant educational experience.

II.2 Methods and Objectives

The current state of methodology in Australian FL classrooms must also leave teachers insecure and perplexed. In most places audio-lingual or audiovisual course books are used [Cf. Board of Secondary School Studies, Queensland 1973] with the teacher either employing the prescribed techniques or reverting to incompatible, "traditional grammar - translation" methods. However, despite some anecdotal evidence that aural - oral skills have improved under such methods [Cf. Ingram 1976], complaints from teachers and students about their boredom are frequent [eg. Burstall 1974] and, more seriously, there is much research evidence to show that they are less successful than "cognitive-code" type courses [Cf. Ingram 1974, Von Elek 1975, Smith 1970]. Furthermore, audiolingual courses are based on linguistic and learning theories that regard language as a set of patterns and vocabulary learned by habit or rote memory and produced as responses conditioned to stimuli. Such theories and their concomitant methodology have long been

refuted [see Ingram 1971 and 1974 where the counter-arguments are summarized] and need no further discussion here except for three related points. First, these theories lead to methods which turn the learner into a passive recipient of a multitude of largely discrete items of vocabulary and structure to be later mobilized for use. Second, these methods contrast with more recent approaches that see language learning as a process of creative reconstruction in which language (i.e. the vocabulary and principles on which the language operates) is learned through use. Thirdly, one consequence of the audiolingual view is similar to "traditional" approaches in that language teaching objectives seem to be reduced to the memorization of patterns and vocabulary, ie., language seems, contrary to its real nature, to be seen as an end in itself.

This focus on learning language and not on developing the ability to use the language to achieve other ends leads inevitably to the justifiable complaint of students that their courses are irrelevant [Cf. Holt 1971] and that the proficiency attained is too low. One recent survey conducted by two students at the Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education has shown that the low level of proficiency that students can expect to attain is the major reason for their opting out of language study. In this survey, 33.3% of Australian-born respondents gave this as the most important reason for the decline in student numbers as against 25% who gave vocational reasons and 15.5% who gave the inappropriateness of the languages taught [Tataraki and Kantor 1976 : 5]. Similarly, Holt found that graduate students' chief complaint about their courses was their neglect of oral skills [Holt 1971 : 7]. The present writer in an extensive survey of language proficiency amongst matriculation French students in Australia and Britain [Ph.D. thesis, forthcoming] found that, after at least 5 years' study, students had reached only about S-1+,R-1+ (sometimes R-2) on the five-point scale of the Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies

[Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies 1968].

This same survey confirmed that objectives, at least as reflected in most of the matriculation examinations, remain fairly narrowly "traditional" with heavy emphasis on grammar-translation-literature skills. In not looking beyond this towards the development of proficiency in functions, registers, or the purposeful use of the language in carrying out relevant tasks, language becomes a charade of itself and, as was noted earlier, instead of being a means to an end, it seems to become the end itself, rendering the total language learning exercise futile. Where some utilitarian objective beyond the language itself seems to be envisaged, this survey reveals that it is generally of a literary nature. Thus, teachers have not taken cognizance of the fact that literature, however important it may be in a nation's or an individual's culture, is only one form of culture, it is only one of many uses to which language is put, and it is a use which holds much less appeal for, and is much less relevant to, students than its ubiquity might suggest [Cf. Holt 1971 : 7-8]. Literature constitutes, furthermore, a special, subtle, and highly skilled use of language, one that is inappropriate for teaching everyday discourse [Cf. Strevens 1968 : 218], and one which demands a level (approximately S-4, R-4 on the FSI Scale referred to above) which is far in excess of that attained by matriculation or, for that matter, by most teachers. In all, it is clear that the objectives that teachers adopt are, at best, confused and, at worst, inappropriate and methods, as reflected by attainments, are generally ineffectual.

II.3 Languages Offered

Despite Australia's geographic location in the Asian-Pacific region and despite the cultural and linguistic diversity of her people, the language teaching system continues to pivot around two European languages (viz. French and German). Whatever intrinsic educational or

literary merit these languages might justifiably (though not exclusively) be claimed to have, they nevertheless are not widely spoken in the region and, especially in the case of French, Australia has received as migrants few native speakers of them. Thus their relevance to Australian students is less readily shown. In addition, the report on the teaching of Asian languages and cultures published in 1970 showed that 93.7% of the people surveyed thought that Asian languages should be taught in Australian schools [Commonwealth Advisory Committee 1970 : 18] while, in the Mount Gravatt survey, 64.7% of "Australians" and 63.5% of "migrants" thought Australians ought to learn a migrant language. [Tataraki and Kantor 1976 : 3]. In addition, the Australian Universities Commission figures show that, despite an overall decline of 33.5% in matriculation language enrolments from 1967 to 1974, migrant languages, though small in number, actually increased by 85.8% (or by 15.9% if German is included) [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1975 : 18]. Yet, in 1976, of the 11,314 foreign language enrolments in Grade 9 in Queensland, 10,361 (or 91.6%) are doing either French or German, only 522 (or 4.6%) are doing an Asian language, and only 399 (or 3.5%) are doing a migrant language. [Figures supplied by the Board of Secondary School Studies, Queensland]. In 1974, throughout Australia, only 7.9% of matriculation language students were taking a migrant language and 9.4% an Asian language [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1975 : 18]. The 1973 survey by the Australian Academy of the Humanities revealed French was taught in all 15 Australian universities surveyed, German in 12, but Italian in only 6, Greek in 3, Russian in 5, Portuguese in 3, Spanish 4, and Dutch and Swedish 2, while no language learning courses were offered for an Aboriginal language, for Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croat, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, or Turkish despite sizeable migrant populations [Cf. Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign

Languages 1975 : 31-32, 44-45]. Clearly the language teaching system has failed to accommodate itself through the languages it offers, to the linguistic nature of Australia's region and of her society.

II.4 Teacher Proficiency

II.4.i Language Proficiency

Even if it is possible to conceive of teachers of other subjects "keeping one page ahead" and still teaching competently, language teachers are precluded from such expedients by the very nature of language and the need to be able, in any conversational situation, to spontaneously mobilize knowledge from diverse parts of the language. Thus, thorough proficiency in the language is a pre-requisite to successful teaching. Carroll estimates a very conservative S-3, R-3 as the minimum level of proficiency for a foreign language teacher. No precise information is available in Australia on the proficiency of either graduates or teachers. However, anecdotal evidence, discussions with teachers, and what other expressions of opinions are available [eg. Holt 1971 : 7-8] would suggest that S-2, R-3 would be a generous estimate for graduates and for teachers. To warrant this rating they have to be able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements while, to reach S-3, R-3, they would have to be able to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics or read newspapers and professional articles with reasonable ease [Cf. Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies 1968 : 1-2]. Few would seem to qualify for this category. In the United States, for example, Carroll found that only 47.9% of teachers reached it in reading skills, 45.7% in writing, 19.3% in listening, and 4.4% in speaking [Carroll 1967a:98]. It seems unlikely that Australian teachers will be much more proficient than this especially where, as in many states, they have not majored in the language they are teaching, did not choose to teach it, and have fewer opportunities than have Americans to travel

to the C_2. The Committee on Foreign Languages of the Australian Academy of the Humanities highlights teacher inadequacy in suggesting that many students, even amongst those who eventually reach tertiary level, reveal "a profusion of elementary errors" directly attributable to incompetent teachers [Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign Languages 1975 : 28-9].

II.4.ii Teacher Preparation

In terms of professional training, the picture is often not much better. No adequate survey of teaching proficiency is available but the anecdotal and experiential evidence is strong. Most language teachers, in Queensland at least, were trained as general teachers and drifted or were "hijacked" into language teaching. Until recently, most pre-service courses were doggedly "practical", often entailing little more than "working through" course books used in the schools. Such technique-based courses inevitably leave the teacher without the rational understanding of what he is doing that alone can give him the flexibility to adapt to new methods, new courses, and different situations. On the two occasions in Queensland that attempts (justifiable enough at the time) were made to introduce audiolingual methods, only the briefest seminars were offered with a few techniques being shown on one or two afternoons. The inevitable result was that teachers complain that they do not know what to do, incongruities continually appear in the internal assessment programmes (eg. overweighting of some skills at inappropriate stages), and, in very many cases, teachers have simply reverted to unacceptable "traditional" methods incompatible with the professed aims of the syllabus [Cf. Board of Secondary School Studies, Queensland 1973] and the course books being used.

II.5 Present Situation in Summary

If this is a just portrayal of the present situation of

language teaching and, in particular, of teacher expertise, the picture that emerges is grim. Student numbers are declining rapidly, courses in use are based on out-moded and invalid principles, objectives are confused, languages offered are inappropriate, and teachers must, on the whole, be considered to be lacking in linguistic proficiency and teaching competence. Perceiving such a situation, the teacher educator must attempt to identify the on-going needs that teachers have and devise ways of meeting them.

III. NEEDS

Teacher needs provide the framework and ultimately the objectives for the teacher educator's activities. These needs lie in four broad, overlapping areas: (1) the specification of goals for language teaching, (2) language, (3) culture, and (4) professional education.

III.1 The Second Language Teacher's Goals

If the language teacher is to meet the needs of the society he serves and offer programmes that are relevant to his pupils, he must first identify the nature of the society and what those needs are. It is not necessary here to argue for the assertion that Australia, with 2 million of its residents born overseas in an increasing diversity of countries, is a pluralist society [Cf. Grassby 1973 : 8-9 and 1976]. Nor do I wish to argue fully here a case to be made elsewhere that second language teaching has a distinctive role to play in such a society in providing practical language skills to promote close interaction between

ethnic groups and, more especially, to develop attitudes appropriate to an harmonious, responsive and rewarding life in that society. Rather, accepting these assertions, I wish to look at the implications for the re-education and continuous education of language teachers.

If it is the case, as is implicit in what has preceded, that the language teaching system remains geared for the days when it provided a literary education for an élite living in a predominantly white Anglo-Saxon society inadvertently separated from its European associates, then there is an urgent need for language teachers to be re-oriented towards the pluralist society and Australia's geographical, political, and economic location. This re-orientation, a task for teacher educators, will require that language teachers be re-educated for new languages, new objectives, and new community-based methods.

III.1.1 New Languages

If the languages currently taught do not meet the needs of this society and are of less relevance to Australian students than other languages, then the range of languages offered must be increased and languages other than French and German made real alternatives, ie., they must be freely offered, if not universally (which would clearly be excessive in terms of resources required and student numbers), at least within easy reach of most students. If this expansion in languages offered is to occur, then the major need is for a rapid expansion in teacher resources. Three approaches to satisfying this need are evident.

First, language teacher exchanges between this country and the country where the language is spoken should be encouraged. This would provide each country involved with native speaking teachers or "assistants" of English or the L_2. In addition, Australian teachers would have the opportunity to learn the L_2 and to experience amongst native speakers the language and culture that they will subsequently teach.

Secondly, native speaking teachers can be recruited from amongst the migrant population and given the necessary training or re-training. This suggests a major area of need to which teacher educators must respond.

Thirdly, existing teachers of French or German should be given an opportunity in intensive, full-time courses to acquire another language. Such a scheme would seem to hold most promise for the rapid provision of teachers of new languages since, provided suitable methods are used in sufficiently intensive and preferably residential courses, the time required to provide a trained language teacher with a new language is considerably less than that needed to give initial professional education to an untrained native speaker. Thus, the U.S. Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies estimates that an "average aptitude" adult student requires 720 hours or twenty-four 30 hour weeks to reach S-2+ in a Romance language and this, we have already seen, is about the present level of proficiency of many teachers. Their estimate for a student of superior aptitude is 480 hours or 16 weeks and it is probable that many language teachers who are already bilingual would fall into the "superior" category. Languages such as Indonesian, Greek or Bulgarian require a little longer (about 1000 hours or 35 weeks for S-2+) while Serbo-Croat, Vietnamese or Finnish requires about 1320 hours or 44 weeks. [See Foreign Service Institute School of Language Studies 1973].

Two points remain to be emphasized when one considers the desirability of diversifying the languages to be taught. First, the removal of French or German from the curriculum should not be in question. Both languages, but especially German, have some claim to be considered community languages; both languages, but especially French, are major international languages; and both languages have a considerable claim on the education system as a result of their contributions to the cultural,

philosophical and historical heritage of European Australia. Nor should it be a question of the education system's choosing from amongst the traditionally taught languages, Aboriginal, Asian, or migrant languages. They are not alternatives for the education system though they might be for individuals within the system. Each of these groups and each language within the group have distinctive benefits to offer in educational, literary, and practical terms; each has its distinctive contribution to make to the development of inter-cultural understanding in the Australian community; and, in terms of inter-cultural understanding and tolerance in general, each provides equally with the others the experience of crossing one's own cultural and linguistic boundaries and is equally propitious for the needed attitudinal development.

Secondly, the needs discussed in this section are clearly on-going needs; they are needs to be envisaged in a continuing programme of teacher education. This is so, firstly, because the need for teachers to maintain their language proficiency poses a continuing need to be met by teacher re-education programmes. They are continuing needs, also, because the languages needed are continually changing as new sources of migrants are tapped or new refugee groups are admitted. The relatively recent upsurge in South American, Yugoslav, and Turkish migration, for example [Working Party on Languages and Linguistics 1975 : 45], and the influx of Vietnamese refugees have provided strong reasons for expanded opportunities to be given for the learning of Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Serbo-Croat and Vietnamese.

III.1.ii New Objectives

We have already seen that Australian language teaching has apparently proceeded on the assumption that it exists in a homogeneous society and that its major, perhaps sole, contribution to the education of the child is to train him to produce "correct sentences" in the FL, to give

him a cursory introduction to the culture and civilisation of the C_2, and to endeavour to introduce him to the FL literature whether or not his language proficiency is adequate for it. Yet it is trite, but accurate, to observe that rapid travel and communications have turned the world into a global community. Australia's migration policies have produced a multilingual and multicultural society which is not homogeneous but is composed of people of diverse ethnic origins often forming distinguishable ethnic communities. The role of the education system in such a society is clearly different from that in a homogeneous society. Firstly, second language skills to enable ready communication between individuals and groups for social, business, educational and political purposes are essential. Secondly, the education system's role as the transmitter of a community's culture and life-style is more complex. Thirdly, if such a community is not to fragment into introspective and, perhaps, antagonistic ethnic groups, the various communities must be able (even encouraged) to co-exist as equals and to interact and communicate with each other in the personal, insightful and understanding way that is possible only if they speak each other's languages and understand, or at least tolerate, each other's cultural traditions. Finally, the education system (as the foregoing suggests) must develop in its students cross-cultural attitudes favourable to an harmonious and rewarding life in the pluralist society, attitudes such as tolerance, acceptance of the right of others to be different, openmindedness, and empathy.

It is particularly language teaching which can respond to these implicit needs by providing cultural knowledge, by providing communication skills, and by developing suitable attitudes. In particular, it provides the student with the ability to step outside the bounds of his own ethnocentricity, to see the inevitable but tacit constraints that his own linguistic and cultural heritage imposes on him, and to experience what it is to belong to a different language and culture.

Some teachers might wish to respond that these have always been the goals of language teaching but, in reply, it could be claimed that they have never received more than lip service. We saw earlier that students fail to develop the FL to a realistic level of practical proficiency and a pious wish to improve cross-cultural understanding will achieve nothing especially when the courses, as shown by the statistics quoted earlier, turn students off and when, in any case, they make no overt attempt to focus at any time on developing cross-cultural understanding apart from the listing of a few generally "interesting" and a-typical facts about the C_2 and its people. If the desired ends are to be achieved, language teaching must be deliberately re-oriented towards two broad goals, first, the development of practical skills and, second, the development of appropriate cross-cultural attitudes. Radical re-structuring is needed but this requires that teachers be re-educated to more accurately perceive the changing needs of Australian society and to perceive the role that language teaching can and must play in meeting those needs. Only then will teachers be able to conceptualize new language teaching objectives and develop teaching strategies that will enable those objectives to be achieved.

III.1.iii. Community Involvement

The implications of the re-oriented objectives that have just been referred to are far-reaching and penetrate every aspect of language teaching. It is not the place of this paper to spell out and justify the new methodology[1] and the re-structured courses that result. This will be discussed elsewhere and will be exemplified in practice in re-modelled courses starting at Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education in the near future. In the most general terms, however, it leads to what might be termed a "community involvement" approach to language teaching.

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[1] Note that the term "methodology" is being used in the broadest possible sense to include all the activities associated with language teaching and learning and not limited to such issues as the use or otherwise of translation, the use of aural-oral or situational methods, etc.

The reasons for this approach are diverse. Envisaging the goal of practical skill development, they include, for example, the need to contextualize language practice, the need to create situations in which purposeful and natural language use will occur, and the need for the language to be "practised" and used for some end beyond itself. Envisaging the goal of the development of favourable cross-cultural attitudes, the reasons include the need for the members of the other culture to be perceived as fellow human beings and not just, in the case of the French, for example, as eccentric dancers on broken-down bridges, as perpetual Eiffel Tower visitors, or as meticulous agreement observers. One might object that this is a caricature of the attitude towards the French that language courses traditionally convey and yet it is the almost inevitable result of learning about a people and their culture instead of becoming acquainted with individuals. It is only when direct personal interaction takes the people of the other linguistic and cultural group off their museum shelves that worthwhile cross-cultural attitudinal development can occur. In this, language learning is important both because it permits the learner in some abstract sense to escape beyond the boundaries of his own language and culture and because it enables individuals to meet as equals and to experience each other as fellow human beings with the same array of needs and emotions which might, they will find, be transformed differently into expression.

It is also worth noticing that the case for community involvement as a central part of the language learning programme is strengthened by recent insights into language and language learning coming from linguistics and developmental psycholinguistics. These include, for example, the notion of language functions, the role of creative re-construction in language acquisition, the intrinsic learning schedule which seems to be largely independent of the teacher's schedule, and the fact that

language is learned through use.

In all, community involvement would seem to have a crucial, even pivotal, role to play in language learning and teaching in the pluralist society. Misused, however, or inadequately supported by other activities such as individualized support for grammatical development, the language programme is in danger of becoming dilatory and fragmentary. Teachers need the opportunity in this as well as in other aspects of methodology to conceptualize rationally the whole language teaching process, to see clearly the precise role that community involvement can play, to learn to utilize it appropriately, and to become acquainted with the human and other resources that the community has to offer. To achieve this, they need not only to consider it as teachers in re-education programmes but, desirably, to experience it themselves as they re-develop their own language skills and attitudes to life in the pluralist society.

III.2 Teachers' Language Needs

III.2.i Upgrading and Maintaining Proficiency

UPGRADING : We have already seen that the general level of language proficiency amongst teachers is low, probably not in excess of S-2, R-3, and that there is an urgent need for them to be given more opportunities to increase their language proficiency at least to S-3, R-3 but desirably to S-4, R-4. This is especially so where they are working in a pluralist society, contacting native speakers and teaching their children. Without this, their confidence to be able to interact as educated people with native speakers must be attenuated. They will also lack the facility needed to introduce into their courses the wider range of content that is required if students are to learn the language through using it for other purposes and in studying other subjects. In addition, it is justifiable to expect language teachers to have some familiarity with

the literature of the language and culture that they teach but it is not before the S-4, R-4 proficiency levels that genuine literary appreciation becomes possible.

MAINTAINING : Furthermore, programmes of in-service education must recognize the need teachers have for opportunities to maintain their language skills. This is especially important if they are in situations allowing few opportunities to contact native speakers in the community.

In meeting both needs (i.e., for the upgrading and the maintenance of skills), three types of opportunities, in addition to those recommended earlier in discussing "Community Involvement", seem desirable; special courses, visits abroad, and residential colleges. Courses must be constructive, creative, and focus on the purposeful use of the language. There is much evidence reported, for instance by Carroll [1967], that "remedial" courses of the "drilling out errors" type have no significant effect or even a negative effect on proficiency [Carroll 1967:202]. Emmans et al, in their study of the use of FL's in industry and commerce, found that the "new" graduates who had experienced skill-and function-oriented courses gravitated to jobs demanding higher proficiency than those who had followed more traditional courses [Emmans et al 1974 : 41]. Similarly, at a conference in Birmingham in 1975, the futility of "remedial" courses in preparing overseas students to participate successfully in British universities was continually shown [eg. Davies 1975, Wallace 1975, Close 1975]. In addition, anecdotal evidence gathered here, in Britain, and in the United States reveals a very strong dislike by students of such courses. Clearly, though teachers require special courses, they must be function-based and teach the use of the language rather than merely pick away at errors.

The second type of opportunity required to meet teachers'

on-going language needs is the opportunity to spend regular, extended periods in the C_2. Although rarely experienced in Australia, such opportunities are essential in pre-service courses but they are equally desirable at regular intervals during teachers' careers in order to modernize their idiom, enhance their fluency, and maintain their cultural awareness. Carroll, in the study already referred to, found that even a brief period abroad had, "a potent effect" on a student's language skills [1967 : 200]. Elsewhere he described the amount of time spent abroad as "probably the most important variable associated with the attainment of high language proficiency" [1967 : 203], and he found that the length of time abroad correlated with the ultimate proficiency attained in the course [1967 : 139]. A similar effect of time spent in the C_2 is seen in the reports of the examiners of the various British examining boards and Emmans found that the more time the graduates he surveyed had spent abroad, the higher they rated their language proficiency [Emmans et al 1974 : 46]. It is also significant that the Council for National Academic Awards requires all language majors in British polytechnics to spend at least a year abroad during their courses [Council for National Academic Awards Languages Board 1974 : Paragraph 10.1] and the Committee on Foreign Languages of the Australian Academy of the Humanities urges that a similar policy be adopted here [Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign Languages 1975 : 37]. Yet, few Australian language teachers have spent any significant period in the C_2. Their need to do so is great.

The third type of opportunity teachers need in order to develop and maintain language proficiency comes from a recognition that costs and distance will prevent teachers from benefitting as frequently as they require from travel abroad. The pluralist society provides comparable opportunities near at hand for teachers of major community languages but residential colleges where teachers can live in a French, Indonesian, or

Japanese micro-environment for the duration of their course can also do much to motivate participants to use the language. Residence in a college embeds that use in the needs of everyday life and can provide an atmosphere in which more of the culture and way of life of the P_2 can be experienced than in a barren lecture room.

III.2.ii New Languages

Finally, one should note again the need, in the light of social changes in Australia, for teachers to be given the opportunity to acquire new languages, especially migrant, Aboriginal and Asian languages.

III.3 Cultural Awareness

Language courses in Australia have traditionally adopted a highly restricted view of what "culture" is and, in particular, they have tended to focus almost exclusively on fine literature [Cf. Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign Languages 1975 : 33]. With a new emphasis falling on attitudinal development, with readier information on and access to the everyday "culture" (eg. of the media) of the C_2, with a trend, slight here but marked overseas, towards the full integration of languages with other studies [Cf. Australian Academy of the Humanities Committee on Foreign Languages 1975 : 33-34 and James and Rouve 1973], and with emphasis falling on interaction with the ethnic community in Australia, the need is evident for teachers to gain familiarity with a broader cross-section of the culture of the FL and its speakers. In addition, greater integration of the L_2 with its culture will enhance language proficiency by ensuring that, instead of the teacher (or student, for that matter) acquiring a set of almost algebraic formulae on the one hand and an array of interesting facts about the culture and civilisation of the people on the other, both language and culture will form an integrated whole, the former

providing the cohesion for the latter and leading to more penetrating insights and greater appreciation. In addition, much of the paralysis of expression that L_2 learners and teachers suffer seems to arise from a mismatch between an existing conceptual structure and the L_2 [Cf. Ingram and Elias 1974 and Elias and Ingram forthcoming]. This can only be overcome where the teacher is given many opportunities to discuss in the L_2 a broad spectrum of his knowledge and the new culture, ie., where the teacher is given the opportunity to re-experience, re-think, and, hence, re-organize his conceptual structure in terms of the new language.

Continual up-dating of the teacher's cultural awareness is essential. Clearly periods of study abroad or involvement with the local ethnic community can best facilitate this though more frequent courses in inservice education programmes have a role to play if only because of their lower costs. In addition, teachers require regular access to major newspapers, magazines, films, radio and television programmes, and other forms of everyday information from the C_2 or from the Australian ethnic community. Finance and knowledge of what is available are two of the major inhibiting factors which must be overcome if we are serious about providing genuine opportunities for continuous teacher education. A more fundamental need, however, is the one already seen, viz, the need to ensure that teachers are sufficiently proficient in the language to utilize such resources for their own on-going education.

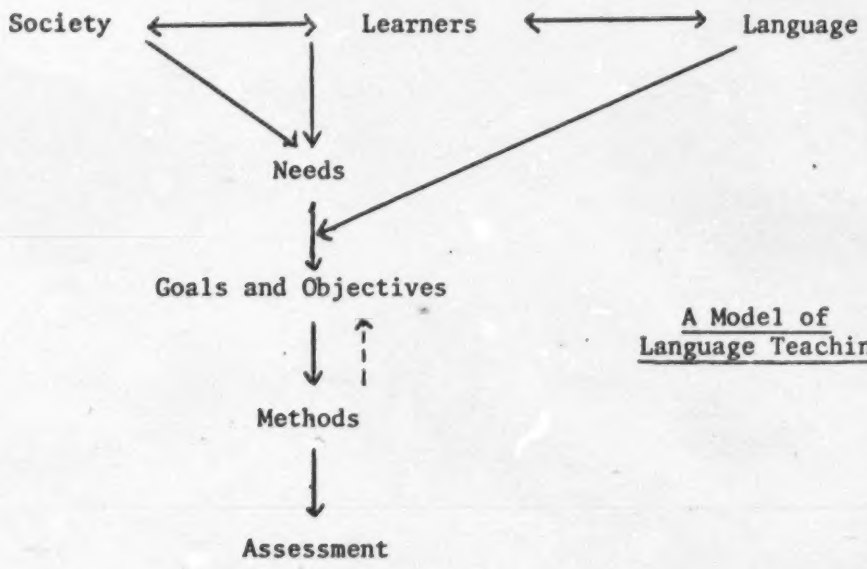
III.4 Professional Education

We have already seen evidence that a low level of teacher proficiency and a concomitant, inadequate terminal language proficiency may be a, perhaps the, major cause of students' disillusionment with the existing language teaching system. Teachers require regular opportunities to improve and modernize their methods, to understand and learn to apply new developments

in the language sciences or in language teaching hardware. They require regular opportunities to rethink their objectives and methods in the light of a clear perception of the changing nature of society and its present and future needs.

When inservice courses are organized, teacher educators tend to be beseiged byteachers clamouring for them to be made "practical". Exactly what "practical" can mean in this context is hard to know and, in any case, drawing a dichotomy between "theory" and "practice" too often leads to an obsession with discrete techniques and mere "tricks of the trade". "Theory", if it is soundly based, must be a generalization from observed facts and, if it is valid, it will have things of interest to say to the classroom practitioner. An obsession with "practice" is too often merely an attempt to avoid thinking and rationally applying knowledge to a unique situation. It is generally a request to be given a list of explicit instructions as to what to do in a particular lesson on a particular point. It is an approach that tends to seek its justification in anecdote and in a dogmatism and conservatism that often masquerades as a responsible adherence to "standards", especially standards which often have little to do with real language communication. Often, too, such a request seems to be no more than a request for existing practice to be confirmed. Directions given in such courses tend to be given dogmatically and accepted without rational understanding. This results in techniques being in danger of becoming ossified despite differing teaching situations or the teacher is likely to flit from technique to technique without being able to conceptualize his task, progress coherently towards an ultimate goal, or adequately cater for the real learning needs of differing students. The "technique" or "ad hoc" approach doubtlessly occurs widely but,as we saw earlier, was well illustrated in Queensland on the two occasions in the 1960's when unsuccessful attempts were made to introduce audiolingual methods.

Only a rational approach to teacher education, whether pre-service or inservice, can overcome such problems. Method does not develop on a stochastic basis. Language teaching involves the teaching of language to a learner in a particular environment. That is, it emanates from three contributory factors, the nature of language, the nature of the learner (including psycholinguistic insights into how he learns), and the nature of the environment (especially the society) in and for which he is learning. Thus, a tentative model of language teaching on which the continuous professional education of language teachers could be based might look like this:



A Model of Language Teaching

True professional competence entails the ability not merely to follow instructions but to be able to rationally organize one's professional conduct in order to achieve desired goals. If the language teacher is to be competent in this sense especially where, as in Queensland, he has very considerable freedom to choose his own goals, his own way of achieving them, and his own way of assessing that achievement, he must have a thorough understanding of those factors, illustrated in the model, that determine his activity.

The need for such understanding arises also from the coincidence of two other factors : firstly, the rapid changes that have taken place in the last two decades in linguistics and psycholinguistics, ie., in our understanding of the nature of language and of the language learning process and, second, the apparent reluctance of publishers of foreign language courses to accommodate to new developments. Although it is twenty years since transformational generative grammar first appeared and at least five or six since it started to have a major and insightful effect on thinking about second language teaching, courses that reflect these advances in any but the most simplistic manner are not yet available in this country, or, my investigations suggest, elsewhere. Of equal significance is the recent emphasis on language functions and the notion that language is learned through use rather than use being delayed until learning has occurred. Interesting and innovative work has occurred in applying these notions to advanced ESL classes in Britain but no attempts have apparently been made to incorporate them in the major commercial productions for school foreign language classes. Though some delay in applying new research findings to practice may be justifiable in order to gain perspective, these delays are excessive. They are even less acceptable where developments (such as language functions and arguments against the repetitive drudgery of behaviourist-based audio-lingualism) are both insightful and clearly in accord with established evidence and teacher experience.

Granted the rapid changes that are occurring in our understanding of language and the learner, granted the rapid social changes in Australia, and granted the reluctance of publishers to innovate, teachers must be educated and continually re-educated in such a way that they will be able to accommodate their activities to these changes.

There is one further role which these considerations

suggest that programmes for the continuous education of language teachers must adopt, viz, the stimulation of research. Applied linguistics, as a science, mediates between the theoretical sciences and classroom practice and, in so doing, it not only feeds information to the practitioner but it can return insights from practice to the theoretical sciences. This process occurs, for instance, when apparently successful language teaching practice is in conflict with the developed principles and could be illustrated by the reservations many language teachers felt about barring rules from their teaching in the heyday of audiolingualism. Such a process promotes the development both of the theoretical sciences and of language teaching. Clearly it can occur only where well-educated teachers familiar with the theoretical sciences are actively involved in the classroom and are objectively and rationally observing and investigating their own teaching and their students' learning. It is desirable, therefore, that postgraduate and inservice programmes give teachers experience in basic research. Thus, for example, a graduate diploma in language teaching being designed at Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education has a major research component in the final semester. This component not only aims to familiarize teachers with what is going on currently in applied linguistics but, by requiring teachers to conduct a research project of their own, aims, first, at stimulating research in language teaching in Australia and, second, at encouraging teachers to look objectively and rationally at their own teaching.

IV. CONCLUSION

In considering the continuous education of language teachers,

this paper has shown the deficiencies of the present situation. Changes in Australia's perceived social structure and her world orientation have created a need for new languages; they have created new goals for language teaching, and have made for it a major new role in the education system. These social changes, together with the new insights that applied linguists have received from the language sciences, have invalidated many of the existing objectives and methods of language teaching. They have moved the focus of the language teacher's activities from the skeleton of the language, its words and rules or "patterns", towards the learner's active, purposeful use of the language in activities of importance to him in his school and community life. The resultant demands upon the education process have highlighted the serious language and cultural deficiences that many teachers experience. It is only when teacher education and re-education programmes are re-designed to rapidly increase the language proficiency of teachers, to give them the theoretical understanding that will enable them to radically re-structure the language teaching system from objectives and languages through to methods and assessment, that the decline in language study will be arrested. It is only then that language teachers will, as informed professionals, be enabled to fulfil their distinctive role in developing in each generation of students those attitudes and skills which are pre-requisite to the equitable and successful functioning of a pluralist democracy in a pluralist world and which provide the means to a more harmonious, responsive, and fruitful life for each individual within it.

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